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67th meeting
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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 67th MEETING

Chairman: Ms. PEÑA (Mexico)
(Vice-Chairman)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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In the absence of Mr. Teirlinck (Belgium), Ms. Peña (Mexico), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

1. Mrs. ARAGON (Philippines), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, proposed that consideration of draft resolution A/C.5/49/L.60 on the rationalization of the work of the Fifth Committee should be deferred until the fiftieth session of the General Assembly.

2. The CHAIRMAN said that she took it that the Committee wished to adopt the proposal of the representative of the Philippines.

3. It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 107: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1994-1995 (continued)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/49/L.68 concerning agenda item 10 (A/49/7/Add.14, A/49/L.68; A/C.5/49/71)

4. Mr. TAKASU (Controller), introducing the Secretary-General's statement of programme budget implications of draft resolution A/49/L.68 (A/C.5/49/71), said that the Secretariat services required by the Open-ended High-level Working Group of the General Assembly would depend on the scope and intensity of its activities and the frequency of its meetings. The Working Group's mandate covered such broad areas as the revitalization, strengthening and reform of the United Nations system and experience had shown that working groups with such broad mandates required substantial assistance from the Secretariat. The Secretary-General had therefore indicated in his statement that additional support services would be required, since the programme budget estimates for 1996-1997 had been based on minimum requirements. He noted that no firm pledges had yet been received, particularly for 1996, and, depending on how the Working Group progressed with its programme of work and whether voluntary contributions were made, the Secretary-General might need to submit revised estimates for 1996-1997 at the fiftieth session.

5. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the Advisory Committee's report (A/49/7/Add.14) on the Secretary-General's statement of the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/49/L.68, noted that total requirements for 1995 would amount to $451,100, while the estimated requirements for 1996 were shown as $1,673,400, for a total of $2,124,500 for the two years. Of that amount, $288,400 was for staff costs, $500,000 for consultants and $1,336,100 for conference-servicing requirements.

6. The Secretary-General anticipated that additional requirements in respect of conference servicing of the Working Group in 1996 would be met from resources already requested and that, with regard to additional resources for the financing of additional staff to service the Working Group in 1996, revised estimates for 1996-1997 would be submitted to the General Assembly at its

fiftieth session. The Advisory Committee's own review of the proposed programme budget for 1996-1997, however, revealed that demand for conference services exceeded capacity. It was therefore difficult, at the current stage, to ascertain the impact of the meetings of the Working Group on conference-servicing capacity.

7. With regard to the Secretary-General's estimate of $500,000 for consultants, the Advisory Committee was of the view that, irrespective of the source of funding, the services of external consultants must be sought only when the required expertise was unavailable within the Secretariat.

8. Finally, the Advisory Committee believed that the Secretary-General's proposal to submit revised estimates for 1996-1997 to the General Assembly to finance additional staff to service the Working Group in 1996 was inconsistent with paragraph 5 of the draft resolution. Subject to the observations he had just made, the Fifth Committee might wish to inform the General Assembly that if it adopted draft resolution A/49/L.68, no additional appropriation would be required for the programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995.

9. Ms. SHENWICK (United States of America) said that her delegation was prepared to adopt draft resolution A/49/L.68 subject to the Advisory Committee's recommendations.

10. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution A/49/L.68, no additional appropriation would be required under the programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995, and that the meetings of the Working Group during the fiftieth session of the General Assembly would require a specific exception to paragraph 7 of Assembly resolution 40/243, by which the Assembly, had decided that no subsidiary organ of the General Assembly could meet at Headquarters during a regular session of the General Assembly unless explicitly authorized by the Assembly.

11. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 3.45 p.m.